

# Veterans Affairs Acquisition News (VA)



## The Department of Veterans Affairs

has the state-of-the-art solutions to meet your organization's health care needs.



To Care For Him Who Shall Have Borne The  
Battle, And For His Widow And His Orphan...  
Abraham Lincoln



## GSA ADVANTAGE! PARTNERSHIP WITH VA

Having identified a need to bring its Federal Supply Schedule healthcare products and services to the Internet, the Department of Veterans Affairs', Office of Acquisition & Materiel Management, began in early Fall 1999, to re-evaluate its E-commerce strategies. In late 1999, the National Acquisition Center (NAC) (the office that manages eight schedules for healthcare products and services) approached GSA's Marketing Division and later met with GSA's E-Business Division to chart a plan for making VA contract items available at the *GSA Advantage!* on-line store.

Once GSA determined that VA needs could be accommodated, with little change to the current technology and infrastructure, a series of collaborative meetings were held to analyze and compare contract data and catalog records between agency information systems. Additionally, GSA updated its free catalog creation software, "Schedule Input Program" to incorporate VA schedule information. Tests were conducted from spring to late summer 2000 with a small number of VA FSS contractors. These contractors had responded to VA's original request for electronic catalogs. Final testing with the GSA

*Advantage!* system included having the E-Business Division place orders and the NAC coordinating order fulfillment with the contractors. Testing was successful. Purchases from other Government offices both overseas and in the U.S. were made through *GSA Advantage!* within 24 hours of posting catalogs, with no formal announcement about the partnership by either GSA or VA!

The first public announcement about the GSA-VA partnership was made during live demonstrations at the 2000 VA Information Technology Conference in Austin, Texas, August 7 -11. VA and GSA were able to show Government and contractor attendees that over 10,000 products with eight companies were now featured at *GSA Advantage!* At the NAC Industry Conference, the GSA E-Business Division provided on-line demonstrations to hundreds of FSS contractors.

As a result of this partnership, and the continuing efforts of VA and GSA, Federal Government employees will have access to an even greater number of commercial products and services at *GSA Advantage!*

## F U N C L I P S



*Did you know...*

*Wind chill is the combination of wind and temperature and is based on the rate of heat loss from exposed skin such as that of a person or animal. As the wind increases, heat is carried away from the body at an accelerated rate, driving the body temperature down.*

*The National Weather Service Baltimore/Washington*